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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0135  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 8333  
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 4520  
RUEHDH/AMCONSUL DHAHRAN 0031  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JEDDAH 000163

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TAGS: [EAID](#) [KISL](#) [OFDP](#) [OVIP](#) [PREL](#) [SA](#) [KO](#) [XF](#)

SUBJECT: ALBANIA SUBMITTING DRAFT RESOLUTION ON KOSOVO  
RECOGNITION AT MAY 4-6 OIC JEDDAH MEETING PREPARATORY TO  
MAY 23-25 DAMASCUS OIC MINISTERIAL

REF: A. 08 JEDDAH 0417

[1](#)B. RIYADH 0588

[1](#)C. RIYADH 0590

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Classified By: Consul General Martin R. Quinn for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)  
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[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Albania is submitting a draft resolution on Kosovo recognition at May 4-6 OIC Jeddah meeting preparatory to May 23-25 Damascus OIC Ministerial. En route to Jeddah OIC meeting today, the Albanian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Admirim Banaj, passed post a copy of Albania's draft resolution urging OIC member states to recognize Kosovo. The ambassador shared his assessments of OIC's opaque decision-making process and the major OIC players as well as the alternative phraseology Albania may propose for the Damascus conference communiqué. See texts paragraphs 9 and 11 below. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) ALBANIAN AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA TO SUBMIT DRAFT RESOLUTION: On his initiative, the Albanian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Admirim Banaj, met May 4 with the Consul General and PolOff to discuss the prospects for Kosovo recognition prior to the start of the May 4-6 OIC preparatory meeting. In September 2008 Ambassador Banaj sought consulate support in arranging high level meetings for visiting Kosovo Foreign Minister Skender Hyseni (ref A). Banaj shared his views on the less than transparent process of adopting a resolution at the OIC, the potential actions of OIC members and observers on Kosovo, and the internal dynamics of the OIC secretariat in Jeddah. Banaj promised to keep post informed of developments.

[1](#)3. (C) OIC SECRETARIAT "INSIDE BASEBALL": According to Banaj, OIC Secretary General Ihsanoglu has played an active, constructive role in helping to move member states towards Kosovo recognition. Banaj mentioned that others at the OIC, including SYG Advisor Ufuk Gokcen, have been helpful in the process. In contrast, Banaj said the OIC Director of Political Affairs, Ambassador Mahdy Fathalla, an Egyptian with a long, pre-OIC diplomatic career, has regularly blocked overtures on Kosovo. Banaj noted how easy -- in the OIC context -- it is for one individual or country to derail a

process, but remarked that Ihsanoglu has made sure that Fathalla "understands his place in the organization."

14. (C) OPERATIVE CLAUSE OF DRAFT RESOLUTION: Banaj passed to post a complete draft resolution that will be discussed at the preparatory meeting in Jeddah beginning May 4 (full text para 9 below). The resolution notes the legal authority for Kosovo recognition and independence, but stops short of calling on all member states to recognize Kosovo, instead leaning more toward economic cooperation and consideration of diplomatic ties. The operative clause number 4 states "the establishment of diplomatic relations with Kosovo is a matter of decision by any OIC Member State in accordance with their own national practice and international law."

15. (C) OIC OFFICIALS EXPRESS SUPPORT: Ufuk Gokcen, a Turkish adviser to SYG Ihsanoglu, told post 10 days ago, that with respect to Kosovo his boss would be happy to see recognition and had personally lobbied for it. Gokcen cautioned, however, that there are "limits" to what the secretariat can do: "As the secretariat, we will not propose a draft resolution." Last week Gokcen phoned the Albanian ambassador to remind him of tight deadlines for submitting a resolution.

16. (C) OIC OPAQUE VOTING/DECISION PROCESS: The annual OIC Foreign Ministers conference May 23-25 in Damascus will address all proposed draft resolutions that clear the May 4-6 Jeddah preparatory meeting. Banaj said he expects to attend the Damascus meeting, commenting that the OIC's procedure for approving a resolution remains opaque even to him after three years representing Albania at OIC. Banaj said he has never seen a formal vote at the OIC and that decisions typically emerge from consensus. While technically OIC decisions should be unanimous, strong chairmen often push resolutions through. Banaj said the veto power has never been exercised at the OIC; both he and Gokcen maintain that OIC member states generally abstain when they are opposed to specific

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motions.

17. (C) SAUDI RECOGNITION FACTOR: Saudi Arabia's April 20 recognition of Kosovo (ref B) was hailed by the Albanian ambassador as a major event which, along with recognition by the UAE in October, may provide momentum to move reluctant Arab and Islamic countries toward Kosovo recognition. Banaj said that Adel Mordad would likely be the Kingdom's representative at the OIC preparatory meeting and Saudi support for any pro-Kosovo initiative was expected.

18. (C) ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR PLAYERS: Banaj named Algeria as the country most staunchly opposed to Kosovo recognition owing to its own situation in the Western Sahara. Gokcen said that Indonesia, Morocco and Egypt could also hold up the process. Iran has generally been opposed to recognition as well. Banaj opined that Iran's stance may be in reaction to US support for Kosovo and thus a kind of "adolescent revenge." As for Russia's exercising its influence as an observer at the OIC, Banaj said he had no insight about Russia's possible action around the fringes in Jeddah or in Damascus, but noted that observers are sometimes asked to leave during sensitive OIC meetings. He also believed "Moscow had lost clout with Muslims as a result of its Abkhazia problem" and that it might now be "a little late for Russia to prevent OIC members from coming on board." Both Banaj and Gokcen cited Egypt's unhelpfulness in "suppressing" the language used on Kosovo. Banaj said he can count on strong support from Turkey and the Turks at OIC.

19. (SBU) DRAFT RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY ALBANIA:

BEGIN TEXT

Draft resolution no(.on the situation in Kosovo

The 36th session of the Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Prosperity and Development), held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, from 23-25 May 2009( A.H. ((.20009); Guided by the principles and purposes of the Charter of United Nations, the Charter of OIC, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions of August 1949, 1951, Geneva Convention on Refugees and the Additional Protocols of 1977, as well as other instruments of international humanitarian law; (adopted by OIC previously)

Upholding the role of UN in the peaceful settlement of disputes and (the) maintenance of international peace and security; (adopted by OIC previously)  
Referring the UN Security Council,s Resolutions, No. 1160 (of 31st of March 1998,) No. 1999 (of 23rd September 1998) No. 1203 (of 24th of October 1998) No. 1239 (of 14 May 1999) and 1244 of 10th of June 1999 and the relevant Statements of its President and Secretary General; (adopted by OIC previously)  
Referring to the Resolution No. 16/13 adopted at the Thirty-first Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Istanbul on 14-16 June 2004; the Resolution No. 36/34 of the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Islamabad, 15-17 May 2007, the Final Communiqu of the 11th OIC (shtuar) Summit, Dakar, 13-14 March 2008, the Declaration of the OIC Ministerial Meeting in Kampala in June and in New York in September 2008, where is noted the Declaration of Independence by the Parliament of Kosovo of 17 February 2008; (adopted by OIC previously)  
Reaffirming the strong interest of OIC regarding the Muslims in the Balkans, and the importance of the stability in the whole Balkan region, (adopted by OIC previously)  
¶1. Takes note of the progress made towards strengthening the democratic institutions of Kosovo, serving peace and stability in the country and the whole region;  
¶2. Takes further note of the accelerated UN Mission,s reconfiguration, deployment of EULEX throughout Kosovo, in compliance with UN Secretary General,s guidelines and the current Kosovo institutional and legal framework;  
¶3. Welcomes the continuing efforts of the European Union to advance the European perspective of Kosovo and the whole of the Western Balkans, thereby making a decisive contribution to regional stability and prosperity; (language adopted by the Security Council Presidential Statement on November 26, 2008)

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¶4. Affirms that the establishment of the diplomatic relations with Kosovo is a matter of decision by any OIC Member State in accordance with their own national practice and international law. (EU language) OR 4/1 Notes that OIC member states will decide in accordance with their own national practice and international law on their relations on Kosovo; (EU language)  
¶5. Welcomes the cooperation of Kosovo with the OIC Economic and Financial institutions and its Member States, and calls on the international community, including the OIC Member States, to continue contributing to the fostering of the Kosovo,s economy (partly adopted by OIC previously)  
¶6. Requests the Secretary General to follow up the implementation of the present Resolution, and to submit a report there on to the 37 Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers.

END TEXT

¶10. (C) Albanian ambassador also shared with post the following alternative phraseology on Kosovo that Albania may propose for the Damascus conference communique:

¶11. (SBU)

BEGIN TEXT.

DRAFT PARAGRAPH ON KOSOVO

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE 36 OIC MFA CONFERENCE

¶1. The Conference noted the declaration of Independence by the Assembly of Kosovo, on February 17, 2008. Recalling the continued interest of the OIC regarding the Muslims in Balkans, the Conference expressed its solidarity with the Kosovar people. (adopted by Dakar Summit) The Conference decided to remain seized on the developments related to Kosovo, including to explore as appropriate and in due time, possibilities of recognition,/establishment of diplomatic relations/ support and cooperation.

OR

¶2. The Conference noted that Member States will decide in accordance with their own national practice and international law, on their relations with Kosovo. (EU language)

OR

¶3. The Conference noted that Member States will recognize

the independence of Kosovo, in accordance with their own national practice and international law.

OR

¶4. The Conference noted that Member States will establish diplomatic relations with Kosovo, in accordance with their own national practice and international law.

END TEXT.

¶12. (C) COMMENT: Albanian ambassador Admirim Banaj expressed hope that Saudi Arabia's April 20 recognition of Kosovo would provide an opening for broader recognition from Arab and Islamic countries. He thought the timing of the Saudi decision along with Albanian action to raise the issue at OIC could generate some forward momentum -- if not quite a surge in individual country recognition. (Volunteering autobiography when asked about his previous postings, Banaj said that he is by profession an architect, university teacher and cartoonist and was surprised when suddenly named three years ago as Albania's ambassador to Riyadh.) Post will continue to report on OIC developments with regard to Kosovo. END COMMENT.

QUINN